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General Assembly
Sixty-second session

Official Records

55th plenary meeting
Tuesday, 20 November 2007, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Kerim ..... (The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Abdelaziz (Egypt), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda items 71 and 72 (*continued*)

Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: reports of the Secretary-General (A/62/324 and Corr.1)

(a) Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

Reports of the Secretary-General (A/62/72, A/62/83, A/62/87 and A/62/323)

(b) Special economic assistance to individual countries or regions

Report of the Secretary-General (A/62/310)

(c) Assistance to the Palestinian people

Report of the Secretary-General (A/62/82)

(d) Strengthening of international cooperation and coordination of efforts to study, mitigate and minimize the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster

Report of the Secretary-General (A/62/467)

Draft resolution (A/62/L.12)

Assistance to survivors of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, particularly orphans, widows and victims of sexual violence

Report of the Secretary-General (A/62/310)

Mr. Castellón Duarte (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me first to express my solidarity with the Government and people of Bangladesh, Mexico and the Dominican Republic for the losses they have suffered as a result of the enormous floods, and to the people and Government of Chile for the disaster following the latest earthquakes.

The Caribbean coast of Nicaragua with its ethnic diversity and great cultural riches occupies 46 per cent of the country and is organized into two autonomous regions. Its human and natural resources, history, cultural diversity and geographic location make up the basic elements to ensure proper living conditions for the people and to make substantial contributions to the country in social, economic and political terms.

However, on the morning of 4 September 2005, Hurricane Felix — a category-five hurricane — hit the country 51 kilometres north of Bilwi in the North Atlantic Autonomous Region, revealing once again the vulnerability of the area — owing to the systematic poverty and exclusion experienced in the Caribbean region of Nicaragua — as those principally affected by the hurricane were indigenous peoples of Miskito, Sumo-Mayangna and African descent.

That recent event was a tragedy in human, cultural, environmental and economic terms. But it also

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provided an opportunity to launch an organized and coherent effort involving communal, territorial, regional, municipal and national authorities to deal with the emergency and resume development of the region.

Based upon information collected after the hurricane, it affected more than 200,000 people. More than 300 people died and 133 are missing. That irreparable loss of life was also accompanied by a large-scale ecological disaster with enormous consequences. Among the 1.3 million hectares of land affected, 477,000 hectares of forest were devastated. That loss should not be measured in terms of the loss of timber, but in the loss of a rich biodiversity and living ecosystem that provided the historical and cultural meaning that the forest represented for the indigenous communities.

The destruction of infrastructure is evidenced by the destruction of 20,394 homes, 57 churches, 102 schools and 43 health care centres. 86,538 hectares of traditional and non-traditional agricultural crops were destroyed as well as 40,011 large and small farm animals. 70.8 per cent of the fowl, 18.9 per cent of the pigs and 10.2 per cent of the cattle were lost. Many fishing boats and much equipment were also destroyed, in particular small boats and 48,355 pieces of fishing equipment.

500 kilometres of all-weather roads were affected, including bridges and drainage pipes. It also caused the partial destruction of the only sea port that the area has. The damage caused by the hurricane is estimated at some $850 million.

The response of friendly States and the United Nations to the tragedy was immediate, including a Flash Appeal by the Central Emergency Response Fund and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, which provoked an immediate reaction from the international community. In light of all of that, on behalf of the Government and people of Nicaragua, I wish to thank all of those States from all parts of the world who have given us aid and who continue to provide relief while we are working to deal with the crisis caused by the hurricane.

At the same time I wish to extend our thanks to the Secretary-General and United Nations staff, as well as to the organs and specialized agencies of the system and the non-governmental organizations that have involved themselves in this crisis.

The Acting President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 49/2 of 19 October 1994, I now call on the observer for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Ms. Johnson (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies): I speak here today on the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance, an issue of great significance to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). But, before I go into my prepared remarks, let me extend the deep condolences of the International Federation, all of our members' national societies, Red Cross and Red Crescent, to the people of Bangladesh, who are in these days very busy responding to the terrible tragedy of the cyclone that affected their country last week. I wish to assure the Bangladesh Government of our deep commitment to continue to do everything we can as the International Federation to mobilize the appropriate resources to assist the Bangladesh Red Crescent in the relief efforts, in recovery and in risk reduction efforts going forward, and of course in full coordination with the Bangladesh Government and United Nations agencies and other humanitarian actors.

As we have been reminded through the course of yesterday's debate and this morning's, natural disasters of all kinds affect peoples around the world every day. This debate today is actually about the future of millions of vulnerable people throughout the world.

I will focus some of my comments on the way environmental degradation and climate change are impacting humanitarian assistance, and on the implications for Governments and humanitarian organizations alike.

We welcome the increased attention of the international community to climate change and we applaud the determination of the Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly in bringing about intergovernmental dialogue within the United Nations system on what may be one of today's greatest global challenges. It is also a challenge the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) will address at the thirtieth international conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent next week in Geneva.

The Secretary-General's speech at the launching of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in Valencia last week was a clear call to action and

highlights the urgency of a consolidation of political will. Much relevant background is in his report on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, which confirms the dramatic increase in disasters over the past 20 years. Statistics also point to a dramatic increase in localized, small-scale disasters affecting communities of under 25,000 people.

We are all well aware of the need to invest in disaster preparedness, and many speakers in this debate have already made that point. Let me return to the situation in Bangladesh to illustrate it. The Bangladesh Red Crescent, supported by the International Federation, had been investing in preparedness and early warning measures for more than 20 years before Cyclone Sidr hit the country. That demonstrates what can be done. The Bangladesh Red Crescent Society worked with national authorities to ensure that those preparedness efforts were very effective. Despite that, of course, there has been a terrible loss of life and of livelihood, and we are now desperately working with people there to recover their lives and dignity. We welcome the acknowledgment of that work and the endorsement of the International Federation's emergency appeal by the Emergency Relief Coordinator, Mr. John Holmes, at his press conference on 16 November.

The International Federation believes that an increased emphasis on vulnerability and risk reduction will reduce the impact of such disasters. Our experience shows that investing in risk reduction measures can save thousands of lives and billions of dollars every year, and at a fraction of the cost of disaster response. We are working with National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies at one level and with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee to deliver a more risk-informed humanitarian action. We call on all Governments to give new priority to risk reduction measures, and on donor Governments to raise significantly their support for that action.

The increased number of smaller disasters points to the need to enhance disaster preparedness and response capacity at the local and national levels. That encompasses effective national disaster management mechanisms that include a Red Cross or Red Crescent society. Many countries have established such mechanisms, and good examples of their effectiveness are available every week, as demonstrated in Bangladesh.

A national society provides a unique bridge linking Government capacity and policy to the efforts of ordinary people in small villages and communities across the country. A national society works as an auxiliary to its national authorities in the humanitarian field and is present throughout the country and at the grassroots, thanks to its volunteer base in many communities. The IFRC calls on Governments to enhance partnerships with their National Red Cross or Red Crescent Society to improve national and local disaster preparedness, risk reduction and response capacities.

Another vital component of national disaster preparedness is legal preparedness. The IFRC's International Disaster Response Laws, Rules And Principles Programme has been developed to help Governments improve their regulatory frameworks for those disasters that require international humanitarian assistance. Well-functioning legal and policy frameworks can minimize bureaucratic barriers and maximize the quality and coordination of international aid.

Over the past 18 months, the International Federation has conducted a multi-stakeholder consultation involving over 140 States, national societies, United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations on how legal issues emerging in international response to non-conflict disasters can be more adequately addressed at the national level. The consultation process has resulted in the formulation of important recommendations for strengthening legal preparedness at the national level, including draft guidelines for strengthening national legal preparedness. That will also be discussed at the thirtieth international conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent next week in Geneva.

Many local and national disasters do not receive sufficient attention or assistance from the international community. IFRC has therefore significantly scaled up and improved its use of its own Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF). The Fund delivers start-up cash to Red Cross and Red Crescent societies within 24 hours of a disaster to ensure life-saving early action. Financial support from DREF, for instance, to the Mozambique Red Cross has enabled it to quickly respond to neglected, small-scale disasters, such as drought and cholera, as well as to better-known disasters, such as this year's floods.

The International Federation relies on donor support to strengthen its support of local and national response to small-scale disasters. The Silent Emergencies Fund of the Netherlands Government and the Netherlands Red Cross is an excellent example of possible funding partnerships and good humanitarian donorship in that field.

Although I have focused on climate-related disasters, we also continue to respond to industrial disasters. The inclusion in this debate of the agenda item relevant to the Chernobyl disaster is an important reminder of just that need. Since 1990, the IFRC, together with the national societies of Belarus, Ukraine and Russia, have been implementing the Chernobyl Humanitarian Assistance and Rehabilitation Programme (CHARP) to address the basic needs of those living in the area affected by the Chernobyl disaster.

After 17 years, CHARP has accumulated unique practical experience in how to support affected populations and establish early detection, which can be used in preparing and responding to future industrial accidents and disasters. However, despite considerable contributions from the Irish Government and the Japanese Red Cross, our appeal for 2008-2009 remains seriously underfunded. The IFRC calls on Governments to support the human development activities undertaken by national societies, including those to be outlined by the United Nations action plan for Chernobyl recovery to 2016. The IFRC also calls on Governments to sustain their political will and engagement in the tripartite ministerial process.

The IFRC is determined to reduce the number of deaths, injuries, illnesses and overall impact from disasters, diseases and public health emergencies. We are committed to coordinating with the United Nations and all relevant stakeholders in our humanitarian action and to supporting local and national initiatives. On the occasion of this important debate, I would like to remind us all that this requires better preparedness and contingency planning, more flexible funding, an increased focus on risk reduction at the community level and upward, and a readiness to effectively address the humanitarian consequences of climate change.

The Acting President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 47/4 of 16 October 1992, I now call on the observer of the International Organization for Migration.

Mr. Dall'Oglio (International Organization for Migration): At the outset, on behalf of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), I would like to express our deepest sympathy to the Government and the people of Bangladesh at this moment of suffering for the loss of human lives and the devastating consequences caused by Cyclone Sidr.

Once again, the General Assembly debate on the strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations is taking place in the wake of yet another major natural disaster. That in itself is a somber reminder that the incidence and severity of disasters associated with natural hazards continue to intensify.

Strengthening cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters is a topic intrinsically characterized by collaboration and partnership between a broad range of stakeholders, particularly in the areas most relevant to IOM's operational work: situations of population displacement, sudden population movements, and forced migration within and across borders.

The relationship between the environment and migration is now attracting increased attention. The complex links between environmental change, human security and migration are yet to be fully understood, but undoubtedly, the human impact associated with natural disasters due to climate change and vulnerabilities linked to population growth, environmental degradation and unplanned urbanization, among other factors, is on the rise.

While certainly not the only scenario leading to environmentally induced migration, large-scale human displacement in the wake of natural and sudden calamities is perhaps the most familiar one. Devastating tsunamis, earthquakes and floods have uprooted communities, leaving millions without shelter and basic services. In some cases, the restoration of livelihood in affected areas becomes permanently compromised, making return unfeasible. However, it is also recognized that the scale of displacement causing what we now call environmental migration as a result of the gradual deterioration of the environment is far greater than the displacement resulting from individual events, even catastrophic events. IOM has been called upon to contribute to this debate and to advance an

intergovernmental dialogue on these emerging but crucial topics. The forthcoming Council of IOM, to be held next week in Geneva, will devote one of its sessions to climate change, environment and migration.

IOM is a committed actor in the ongoing humanitarian reform process, alongside humanitarian partners from the United Nations system and the Red Cross Movement, including as an active participant in the cluster approach and within the Global Humanitarian Platform. Inter-agency collaboration in the implementation of the cluster approach within the Inter-Agency Standing Committee is now beginning to offer preliminary but promising indications of the achievements that can be made in terms of improved coordination and coherence, if this approach is followed consistently by all partners.

As we near the two-year mark of the cluster approach, we have an opportunity to highlight both its achievements and the challenges it faces. IOM has been participating in the elaboration of the cluster approach and assumed the role of global cluster lead for camp coordination and camp management in internal displacement situations resulting from natural disasters, for which the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has the corresponding lead in situations of conflict-induced displacement. That joint approach is facilitating the building of partnerships and synergies at both the central and field levels with greater coordination and collaboration. The cluster approach should be seen as a way to better respond to the needs of those displaced by conflict or natural disasters. It supports national responses and fills gaps where the national authorities need international support and solidarity. National Governments should be able to call upon any of the cluster leads as a focal point in relevant sectors whenever appropriate.

While it is a cluster lead in camp coordination and camp management, IOM also continues to work on a variety of other, no less important, areas in emergencies, providing assistance and protection to the displaced. The IOM response to the issue of internally displaced persons (IDPs) continues to grow in collaboration with others in the areas of shelter, early recovery and transition, safe evacuation and transportation, return and integration. Additionally, with a new focus on protection in emergencies, IOM is active in the protection cluster and is carrying out training for emergency staff to ensure that protection issues are mainstreamed throughout our operations.

Among the various emergency funding mechanisms available to intergovernmental organizations such as IOM, we would like to highlight the relevance and usefulness of the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), which allowed IOM to quickly deploy capacities and resources in response to 16 crises in 2007 alone. An increase of the contribution to CERF so that it may reach its target goal by 2008 would certainly be a most welcome development.

The report of the Secretary-General (A/62/323) also touches on the topic of the possible use of military assets in disaster settings. IOM particularly welcomes the commissioning of the independent study on the effectiveness of using foreign military assets in international disaster response, as it is crucial to identifying best practices for their deployment, coordination and use in disaster situations. While we believe that humanitarian organizations must continue to be at the forefront of humanitarian aid, the scale of some recent disasters has shown that in certain situations national and international military forces have the necessary capacity at their disposal to respond in an adequate and timely manner. The logistical support and expertise associated with such assets can prove lifesaving in terms of transportation and in reaching remote and vulnerable communities. IOM-civil-military cooperation has contributed to the establishment of disaster preparedness and management teams that have strengthened and sustained national capacity to more successfully deal with such crises, such as the response to the earthquake in Pakistan, to the tsunamis in Indonesia and Sri Lanka, and in Afghanistan.

To conclude, IOM is committed to those most vulnerable in times of crisis and remains dedicated to working resourcefully and proficiently with its partners in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee. We express here our deep appreciation to our partners and supporters, in particular to the Emergency Relief Coordinator and the leadership of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs for their unwavering commitment to the improvement of humanitarian response capacities.

The Acting President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 48/265 of 24 August

1994, I now call on the observer for the Sovereign Military Order of Malta.

Mr. Humphreys (Sovereign Military Order of Malta): Allow me to express my sincere thanks, on behalf on the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of Malta, for the opportunity to take the floor and present the views of the Order on the strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations. Also, on behalf of the Order, I extend our condolences to the people of Bangladesh on the great harm done by the recent cyclone. They remain in our thoughts.

In the past year, large-scale natural disasters alone affected 143 million people and resulted in more than 23,000 deaths. Of course, natural disasters are not the only tragedies that require an emergency humanitarian response. The Order is pleased that the Central Emergency Respond Fund (CERF) continues to make progress towards its objective of improving field-level coordination and further strengthening the humanitarian response of the United Nations in often underfunded crises. The Order of Malta fully recognizes the need for coordination in the field and the pre-eminent role that mechanisms like CERF and United Nations agencies can play in that respect. However, the Order believes that management and funding should not be overly centralized.

The Order of Malta, with its more than 80,000 dedicated volunteers working in 120 countries, works actively in partnership with United Nations agencies, States and local and international non-governmental organizations to further strengthen a synchronized response to humanitarian challenges.

For example, in Burkina Faso, serious flooding at the beginning of September killed or injured dozens of people, displaced 28,000 and washed away vast agricultural lands. At the request of the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Order in Burkina Faso provided community tents, camp beds and blankets. Also, emergency and ambulance corps, set up by the Order's French Association, helped to transport victims to the nearest hospital structures.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Order of Malta, in collaboration with the World Food Programme (WFP), launched a comprehensive food distribution programme that provides approximately 5,000 internally displaced families from the community of Ninja in Bakavu in the Kivu province with 368 tons of food. Safety for the Order's personnel during the distributions was ensured by local administration and military authorities.

In the case of an emergency situation, it is imperative for humanitarian assistance not only to provide immediate relief to victims, but to develop long-term support systems. The areas affected by the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster are one case in which that transition is vital, and it is there that the Order has demonstrated its ability to broaden its role from immediate relief to long-term development. Immediately following the tsunami, the Order of Malta, in close cooperation with local partner organizations, was in South India providing emergency relief in the form of clothing, shelter, food and medical aid for flood victims and, in parallel, assessing projects for the reconstruction phase.

As the Secretary-General's report mentions, the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in the Indian States affected by the tsunami is one of the highest in the country. In the Tamil Nadu region, the Order employed its experience with the virus to start a comprehensive prevention project in 33 villages, and then expanded its commitment to fighting the infection. In addition to learning how to prevent and control further transmission of the disease, people learn how to live with the disease and affected family members receive training on extended home-based care and support. Projects with timetables stretching far into the future are planned and executed in close consultation with national authorities, ensuring the Order's lasting and meaningful presence in an area.

The Order always strives to accomplish two goals in the execution of its humanitarian work. First, it seeks to place local non-governmental organizations at the centre of the relief effort and the training of local staff at the core of many of its projects. Secondly, the Order strongly believes that a long-term commitment is necessary to achieving a lasting impact on the community. That is exemplified in our support to the Palestinian people. The Order of Malta, for 17 years, has operated the Holy Family Hospital of Bethlehem-Palestine, where more than 36,000 healthy children have been delivered. Those works are often carried out under difficult and dangerous conditions.

The report of the Secretary-General on the issue states that the safety of humanitarian and United Nations personnel remains precarious. Significant

measures have been taken to improve the safety and security of humanitarian aid workers, but they continue to be victims of physical attacks, threats and robberies. They are often the first to respond to crises in the most unsafe regions, and the last to remain – long after financial resources ebb. The current numbers are more than just statistics to the Order of Malta, which last year lost 29-year-old Dr. Ezmeray Azizi, who was killed in an ambush in North-West Afghanistan, along with a UNICEF colleague. The Order stands with the Secretary-General in his appeal to Member States to fulfil their obligation under the Charter of the United Nations to ensure the safety of all humanitarian aid workers. It is only with the full commitment and cooperation of all Member States that meaningful steps to enhance security for humanitarian workers can be achieved.

The Order of Malta's humanitarian principles, neutrality, impartiality and independence provide the credentials to continue delivery and to improve its effectiveness in the provision of humanitarian relief and development. Allow me to assure the Assembly that the Order is responding daily to the challenges that humanitarian work presents, and we will continue to closely follow the leadership and initiatives of the United Nations and its agencies.

The Acting President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 45/6 of 16 October 1990, I now call on the observer of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Mr. Buff (International Committee of the Red Cross): The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is pleased to address the Assembly on the subject of humanitarian coordination, particularly in connection with armed conflicts and other situations of violence.

The humanitarian world has evolved rapidly over the past few years as more and more players enter the arena, often with different objectives, operating standards and activities. The humanitarian bodies within the United Nations have embarked on a process of reform. The main donor Governments have also begun a process of collective reflection. Foreign military assistance is increasingly present in humanitarian crises, and the role of secular and religious non-governmental organizations, private companies and other players is growing as well. In that constantly changing environment, the ICRC intends to remain the benchmark organization for neutral, independent and strictly humanitarian action and for international humanitarian law, both through its action on the ground and in its dialogue with beneficiaries, Governments, donors, parties to conflicts and other stakeholders.

Thanks to its active presence worldwide, the ICRC is able to develop and maintain contacts with all those who have a significant impact on the course of armed conflicts and on the humanitarian problems that those conflicts create. Such contacts are crucial in gaining access to the field and in permitting the ICRC to conduct its activities for the victims of armed conflict and other situations of violence. For the ICRC, humanitarian coordination should take place first and foremost in the field. It should be reality-based and action-oriented; in other words, it should be based on real capacities available in the field in emergency situations and not on declarations of intent.

The ICRC has a unique mandate to protect persons affected by armed conflict and it intends to remain the benchmark organization in that area as well, in particular by helping to ensure that all parties to armed conflicts meet their obligations towards civilians, by improving the protection afforded to persons deprived of their liberty, by restoring family links and by obtaining reliable information on missing persons.

With regard to assistance, an activity most of the time closely linked to protection, the ICRC will continue to maintain its approach of covering all emergency needs by providing quality health care in general and medical care in particular, in addition to its relief, water and sanitation activities. It is currently reinforcing its capacity to evaluate the results and impact of its activities.

The ICRC is strongly committed to remaining a reliable and predictable organization that conducts itself in a consistent manner and whose work is underpinned by a strong culture of accountability. It will continue to strengthen its ability to learn from its own experience and from that of other organizations.

Humanitarian needs in complex emergencies largely exceed the capacity of any single organization to cope. Many agencies with varying objectives and principles for action are therefore needed to respond to such emergencies. The diversity of humanitarian actors and approaches can enhance the response and alleviate

suffering if all those involved manage to act in a complementary fashion, in keeping with their respective operational abilities and expertise and with the relevance of their activities to the situation on the ground.

The ICRC takes part in coordination efforts together with other humanitarian organizations. It cooperates in particular with its natural partners, the national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies, in the countries where it works. The ICRC invests in those relationships with a view to strengthening its own capacity for action and that of its partner national societies, in cooperation with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. The ICRC also gives preference to cooperation with national societies participating in international relief operations, in accordance with the rules and agreements of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

At the international level, the ICRC continues to take part in humanitarian-coordination forums. Those include the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, where it enjoys the status of standing invitee; the Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response and the new Global Humanitarian Platform. In addition, the ICRC seeks to maintain and strengthen its bilateral relations with other major humanitarian organizations.

A good example of that is the agreement reached in November 2006 by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the ICRC on individuals and populations of concern to each organization. Taking into account the specific mandates and primary roles of the two organizations, we have agreed to consult one another and to coordinate our activities with a view to ensuring their complementarity, both in the field and at headquarters.

In keeping with its all-victims and all-needs approach, the ICRC has agreed with UNHCR to pursue a structured dialogue in areas of mutual concern relating to protection and assistance for internally displaced persons and refugees. The ICRC is also engaged in this type of dialogue with other major humanitarian agencies within the United Nations system, such as the World Food Programme and UNICEF.

In conclusion, the ICRC is convinced that, in the best interests of the victims of armed conflict and other situations of violence, humanitarian coordination should maximize the added value that each organization can bring to the field. The ICRC sees its added value mainly in being a truly independent and neutral humanitarian actor with, globally, very broad access to those in need of protection and assistance as the consequence of armed conflict or other situations of violence.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on these items.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/62/L.12, entitled "Strengthening of international cooperation and coordination of efforts to study, mitigate and minimize the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster", as orally corrected.

Before proceeding to take action on draft resolution A/62/L.12, I should like to announce that, since its introduction, the following countries have become sponsors of the draft resolution: Albania, Argentina, Austria, Cambodia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, the Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Honduras, India, Israel, Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, the Philippines, Portugal, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Thailand and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to adopt draft resolution A/62/L.12, as orally corrected?

Draft resolution A/62/L.12, as orally corrected, was adopted (resolution 62/9).

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 71 and its sub-items (a), (b) and (c), as well as of agenda item 72.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (d) of agenda item 71?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 10.55 a.m.